

April 4th, 2007

Honorable Congressman
Jeff Miller
1535 LHOB
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Sir:

This letter is in reference to the upcoming Rail Safety legislation to be considered by the House Transportation Committee. In it there is an opportunity to improve the dismal "Fatigue Related, Human Failure Factor" component of so many of our nation's last few year's Train accidents and Derailments.

By eliminating what is commonly called in the industry "Limbo Time", whereby Railroads skirt the Federal Hours of Service requirement through a loop hole that allows them to keep Train Crews on their trains, well past their Federally mandated maximum 12 hours of service, for two, four and even six hours beyond that, you will be taking a giant step towards reducing these accidents.

These Crews are forced to stay in hot Locomotive cabs, without food or rest, on what is a de facto second tour of duty, by requiring that they remain alert, monitoring radio traffic and protecting their train until a relief crew is able to reach the location of the train.

This, after they worked and operated a train for their Federally allowed 12 hours, with the physical and mental taxation that operating and working on a train requires. After they came on duty at a time when most Americans are fast asleep. After they have been on a similar pattern for as many as 14 days without a day off or more. After being unable to attain a "sleeping pattern" for they are not ever on duty at the same time each day.

The sacrifices our Train Crews make day after day, reflect on their children, their spouses, their elderly parents and even their community. Please help improve America's train accident's rate by eliminating the Railroad's lack of incentive to properly manage and care for their most valued resource, their people.

The results will be safer trains and tracks, healthier and more productive employees and railroader families who live in your District and across America that have a better chance to function and thrive in our society.

Hoping you will consider favorably this Legislation if and when it comes before you and actively ask your fellow Congressmen in the Transportation Committee that elimination of “Limbo Time” be an intricate part of it, I am...

Respectfully Yours

Andres Trujillo, Director
United Transportation Union
Florida Legislative Board